

homes to continue to lack vital life saving safety equipment. It is time for Congress to take action to protect our nation's most frail and vulnerable, and prevent similar tragedies in the future.

I urge my colleagues to join me in helping to make nursing homes in their districts, and around the country, safe from the threat of fire.

**A SALUTE TO COACH GAYLE HATCH AND HIS SELECTION AS COACH OF THE U.S. OLYMPIC WEIGHTLIFTING TEAM**

**HON. RICHARD H. BAKER**

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, as many in this chamber now know, Coach Gayle Hatch of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, will be the coach of the U.S. Olympic Weightlifting Team at the 2004 Summer Olympiad in Athens, Greece.

I can think of no one associated with coaching, even at the highest levels, more deserving of Olympic recognition. The Olympics is the venue where the best of our world's athletes compete and pursue the ideals of sportsmanship.

Hard work, hard work, and hard work are three of the most important elements of preparation. Talent is certainly important, but commitment to principle is essential. There is no other challenge to an athlete that holds out the highest standards of conduct, as the minimum standard for admission. This makes participation in the Olympics a rare honor. To be selected as a coach of such competitors is even more special.

It is likely that most in the House who listen to this text would assume it is written as a casual political statement to acknowledge Coach Hatch's recent success. Few would know of our long-standing friendship.

It was well over 20 years ago when I first brought my son Brandon to Coach Hatch's training facility. I thought well enough of him then to trust his guidance with my own son. To the exclusion of all other sports, Brandon trained with a commitment I have not seen before. Today my son is a hard working and disciplined person, in large measure due to the principles instilled in Coach Hatch's gym.

I also know the same is true for many men and women who have been part of the "Hatch" family. Whether in sports or other endeavors, graduates of the "Hatch School of Hard Work" always found ways to succeed in life. This is why I rise today to speak to my colleagues in the House.

Coach Hatch's contribution to the Baton Rouge and sporting community goes far beyond helping a talented young athlete finish in first place. Coach Hatch's work, by instilling principles of decency into young people, is of immeasurable value.

The Olympic Committee has selected Coach Hatch to lead young Americans in the most difficult athletic challenge they will likely ever face. This is a big deal. But I know that our team members will bring honor to America, because of their principled conduct which Coach Hatch will require. Their athletic success will only be an additional reward.

Long after Coach Hatch returns home from Athens, returning I hope, to coach more young

people, the awards and acknowledgments will continue to come. Some may be from an Olympic Committee, or an Olympian here or there, but hundreds will come from dads like me. We know, Coach Hatch, what you have given of yourself to help mold our children into principled and committed young adults.

Although it can't be found or put on a shelf, I hope you take pride in hearing all us dads say, "Thanks Coach".

For those who don't know Coach Hatch, it is worth noting that he has been active as a weightlifting and strength coach for more than 30 years, and the Gayle Hatch Weightlifting Team has won more than 40 men's Junior, Senior, and Masters national championships. Coach Hatch is a member of the USA Weightlifting Hall of Fame, the National Master Weightlifting Hall of Fame and the USA Strength and Conditioning Coaches Hall of Fame. He holds USA Weightlifting's highest certificate ranking, Senior U.S. International Coach, and is the director of USA Weightlifting's Southern Regional Training Center.

**IN RECOGNITION OF THE 105TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL COURT REPORTERS ASSOCIATION**

**HON. MICHAEL K. SIMPSON**

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. SIMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor America's stenographic court reporters and captioners as they celebrate the 105th anniversary of their association.

For centuries, scribes have captured the spoken word to record major and everyday events in recorded history. Shorthand reporters were vital to the preservation of our Nation's founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights. We use them every day in Congress to record the proceedings of our body.

They also provide a valuable service in reaching the hearing-impaired by providing broadcast captioning through Communication Access Realtime Translation (CART). This service benefits millions of Americans every day.

Mr. Speaker, I join with other Members of Congress in honoring and celebrating the efforts of all stenographic court reporters and captioners on July 30, 2004, as they celebrate the 105th anniversary of their association.

**FOOD ALLERGEN LABELING AND CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT**

**HON. MARTIN T. MEEHAN**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act. I would like to thank Representative NITA LOWEY for her leadership on this issue, and I would also like to thank Abby Giarrosso of Methuen, Massachusetts for bringing this important bill to my attention.

Abby and her family request a meeting with my office because Abby wanted to share her

experience as a child with celiac disease and to get legislation passed making it easier for her to eat safely. She shared letters that she had received from food companies in response to her requests for lists of products she could eat. The response letters were telling. Some gave her examples of gluten-free foods and others said that it was just too hard for them to break down their ingredients.

After Abby came in to my office, I immediately cosponsored the bill, and commissioned a certificate for Abby making her an honorary Legislative Assistant for her work to pass this bill into law.

Abby's story is so touching and compelling. At a birthday party she recently attended, they served pizza and cake and all of the children were given an assortment of goodies as party favors. She has a hard time in situations like that because while the other kids can eat the food, she has to just watch. Her parents do a fantastic job working around the problem. At the party they had her bring her own gluten-free pizza. It seemed reasonable to me that if manufacturers are going to sell products that have serious adverse health effects for a large number of consumers, the least they can do is disclose those ingredients.

The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act will make it easier for people with food allergies to more easily identify a product's ingredients. By requiring food labels to list what, if any, of the eight major food allergens are contained in a product, the bill will protect people with food allergies from the risk of dangerous and even life-threatening reactions.

The bill will also help the estimated three million Americans who suffer from celiac disease, an autoimmune disease that's triggered by the consumption of gluten. The legislation instructs the Department of Health and Human Services to define what constitutes "gluten-free" food and how the term should be used on food labels. For those who suffer from celiac disease, like Abby Giarrosso, accurate and easy to read food ingredient labels are critical to their health and well-being.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

**PROTECTING RAILROAD OPERATORS, TRAVELERS, EMPLOYEES, AND COMMUNITIES WITH TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ACT OF 2004**

**HON. JAMES L. OBERSTAR**

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, today my colleagues, Congresswoman BROWN, the Ranking Democratic Member of the Railroad Subcommittee of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Congressmen LIPINSKI, DEFAZIO, CUMMINGS, BLUMENAUER, LARSEN, and MEEHAN, join me in introducing H.R. \_\_\_\_\_'s, the "Protecting Railroad Operators, Travelers, Employees, and Communities with Transportation Security Act of 2004," PROTECTS Act.

On March 11, 2004, a coordinated terrorist attack against the commuter train system of Madrid, Spain, killed 191 people and wounded more than 1,800 others, making it the deadliest terrorist attack against European civilians